

Archaeological Services

An Archaeological Evaluation on land at 61 Main Street, Cosby, Leicestershire

NGR: SP 54721 94852

Nathan Flavell



ULAS Report No. 2014-106 © ULAS 2014

An archaeological evaluation on land at 61 Main Street, Cosby, Leicestershire

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For: Westleigh Developments Ltd. Planning application no. P.A 13/0328/1/PX

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An archaeological evaluation on land at 61 Main Street, Cosby, Leicestershire (SP 454721 294852)

Nathan Flavell

Summary

An archaeological trial-trench evaluation was carried out on land at 61 Main Street, Cosby, Leicestershire (SP 54721 94852) by University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS) from 22nd to 30th May 2014. The work was carried out on behalf of Westleigh Developments Ltd in advance of the proposed redevelopment of the site. Ten trenches, totalling 335.2 square metres were excavated across the site. Overall, the result of the trial-trenching revealed truncation and demolition across the site, apart from a small number of possible medieval linear features in Trench 8 and a stone wall and surface of possible late 19th century date in Trench 3. No preserved topsoil or subsoil (except in trench 8) was noted across the site. The site archive will be held by Leicestershire County Council Museum Services under the accession number X.A79.2014.

Introduction

This document constitutes the final report for an archaeological trial-trench evaluation carried out on land at 61 Main Street, Cosby, Leicestershire (SP 54721 94852). The work was carried out on behalf of Westleigh Developments Ltd by University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS) from 22nd to 30th May 2014.

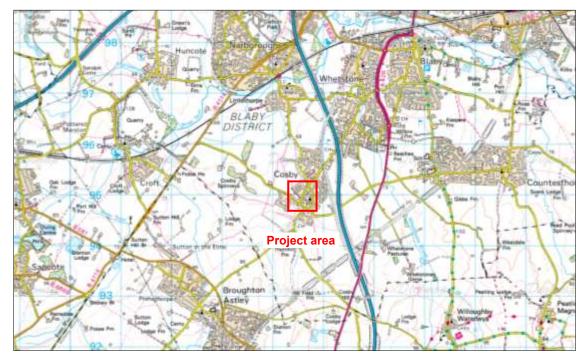


Figure 1: Site Location (Scale 1:50 000)

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The site is presently covered with hardcore and the demolished remains of the depot buildings covering an area of c.1.041 square ha.

The work was requested by the Leicestershire Planning Archaeologist in their capacity as

archaeological advisor to Blaby District Council, in accordance with National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), Section 12: Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment. The work followed the approved Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) as laid out in the *Written scheme of investigation for archaeological work* (Clay 2013).

Geology and Topography

The British Geological Survey of Great Britain, Sheet 169 (Leicester), shows that the underlying geology is likely to consist of superficial deposits of Quaternary clay belonging to the Glen Parva Member overlying bedrock deposits of Triassic mudstone belonging to the Blue Lias Formation (BGS 2008). The site lies on flat ground at *c*.83m above Ordnance Datum (OD).

The British Geological Survey of Great Britain Sheet 169 indicates that the underlying geology of the site is likely to consist of River Terrace deposits. The site is effectively flat, lies at a height of c.73.2m O.D. with terracing at western edge of the site

Historical and Archaeological Background

An archaeological desk based assessment has been undertaken (Kipling 2013). The Historic Environment Record indicates that the site lies in the centre of the historic settlement core of Cosby (MLE10440), close to the Grade II* Listed medieval church of St. Michael and All Angels (MLE11945) and a Grade II Listed post-medieval building, Coates barn (MLE11947). The site has been developed in the modern period, which might limit the potential for any archaeological remains to be present on this site. Concrete surfaces and buried petrol tanks may have damaged any deposits that may have been present.

Archaeological Objectives

The main objectives of the archaeological work were:

- To identify the presence/absence of any archaeological deposits.
- To establish the character, extent and date range for any archaeological deposits to be affected by the proposed ground works.
- To produce an archive and report of any results.

Methodology

The WSI proposed the examination of c.500 square metres of the site, the equivalent of eight 30m x 1.6m and two 15m x 1.6m trenches (Clay 2013). However, site constraints, rubble heaps and buried fuel tanks, meant that some trenches had to be shortened or moved. Trenches 2 and 5 were moved to accommodate them (Figure 2).Trench 1 was extended by 15m, Trench 4 was shortened to 10m, Trench 6 was shortened to 20m, Trench 9 was shortened to 2m. The trench at the western edge of the site was unable to be excavated so an extra trench (10) of 10m was excavated in the area north-west of the tithe barn.

An archaeological evaluation on land at 61 Main Street, Cosby, Leicestershire (SP 54721 94852)

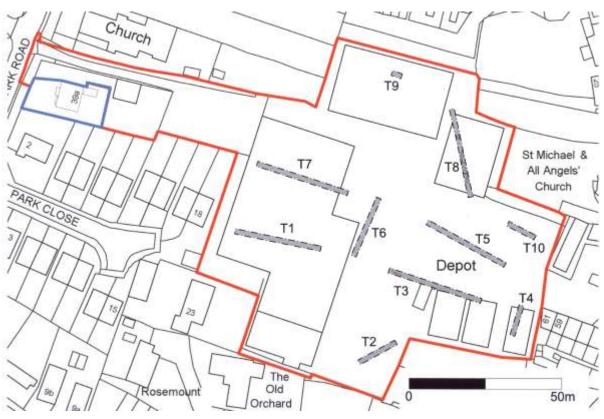


Figure 2: Site plan showing trench locations. *Plan adapted from survey data provided by client.*

Service plans, a CAT scanner and a visual inspection of the ground were used to ensure pipes and services were traced and avoided before work commenced.

The trenches were excavated using a JCB 3CX with a c.1.6m wide, ditching bucket, alternating with toothed bucket where dense rubble was encountered.

Trenches, other exposed areas, sections and existing spoil heaps were visually inspected for features and finds. Archaeological features, if present, were hand cleaned, planned, photographed and sample excavated as appropriate to addressing the objectives of the evaluation. Field notes were recorded on pro-forma ULAS trench recording forms whilst all stratigraphic units would be given a unique context number and recorded on pro-forma ULAS context sheets if deemed appropriate. Archaeological features if present would be drawn to a scale of 1:20, trench plans to a scale of 1:50 and sections to a scale of 1:10. The trenches were located in relation to prominent features within the property and tied into the Ordnance Survey National Grid.

All work followed the *Institute for Archaeologists' (IFA) Code of Conduct* and adhered to their *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological field evaluations*.

Results

Trench 1

Trench 1 was located near the south-west corner of the site, orientated broadly east-west. Machining started at the western end of the trench revealing loose sand with bricks. A sondage was taken down to a depth of 1.5m with the same backfill encountered. Due to the instability of the trench sides, this was backfilled to 0.5m and the rest of the trench taken to approximately that depth. No archaeological features or finds were located and natural geology was not encountered.

Length (m)	Width (m)	l	Area (sq. m)	Min. depth	n (m)	Max	. depth (m)	Surface le	evel	Arc	haeology?
30	1.6		48	0.5			0.7	73.14n	1		No
Interval (m) from west end	0	5	10	15	2	0	25	30			
Overburden depth	0.7	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.	.6	0.6	0.5			
Subsoil depth	-	-	-	-	-		-	-			
Top of natural substratum	-	-	-	-			-	-			
Base of trench	0.7	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.	.6	0.6	0.5			

Trench 2 was located in the southernmost part of the site, orientated broadly north-east to south-west. Machining removed layers of redeposited natural gravels and made ground with brick rubble. Natural geology may have been encountered at the south-west part of the trench but this was difficult to discern due to contamination and water levels.

No archaeological features or finds were located. The natural substratum was probably observed.

Length (m)	Width (m)			Area (sq. m)	Min. depth	ı (m)	Max	. depth (m)	Surface le	evel	Arc	haeology?
15	1.6			24	0.65			0.8	73.22n	ı		No
Interval (m) from southwest end	0	5	5	10	15							
Overburden depth	0.65	0.0	65	0.8	0.8							
Subsoil depth	-	-		-	-							
Top of natural substratum	0.65	0.0	65	0.8	0.8							
Base of trench	0.65	0.0	65	0.8	0.8							

Trench 3

Trench 3 was located in the south-eastern part of the site, orientated broadly north-west to south-east. Machining removed brick rubble and what appeared to be a layer of re-deposited brown sandy-clay soil deposit. Again natural gravels may have been observed at a depth of 0.8m however groundwater and contamination made this difficult to ascertain.

A granite stone wall (303) was observed approx. 12m from the north-west end of the trench. It had a north-east to south-west alignment, approx. 0.8m of which had at least two courses with remnants of mortar bonding. Directly to the south-east were the remnants of a cobbled surface (302), approx. 0.7m wide. They appeared to be truncated to the north-west.

At the north-west end of the trench a granite stone surface (301) was encountered. It was made up of large blocks typically measuring 0.3×0.3 m to 0.1×0.1 m in size with flat worn surfaces. The trench was extended to uncover the extent of the surface. It continued for at least another 2.5m at which point contaminated water flooded the area. The natural substratum was probably observed.

Length (m)	Width (m)	l	Area (sq. m)	Min. depth	n (m)	Max	. depth (m)	Surface le	evel	Arc	haeology?
32.5	1.6		52	0.5			0.8	73.47n	1		Yes
Interval (m) from	0	5	10	15	2	0	25	30			

northwest end								
Overburden depth	0.5	0.7	0.6	0.8	0.75	0.8	0.8	
Subsoil depth	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Top of natural substratum	0.8?	0.8?	0.8?	0.8?	0.8?	0.8?	0.8?	
Base of trench	0.5	0.7	0.6	0.8	0.75	0.8	0.8	

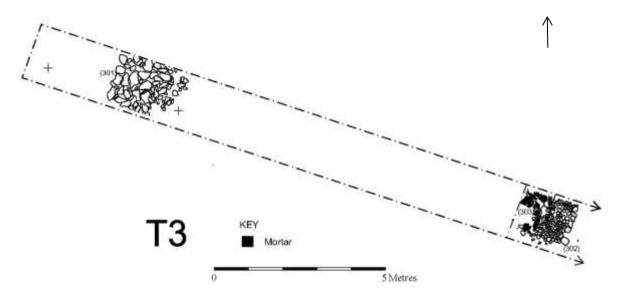


Figure 3: Trench 3 plan



Figure 4: Trench 3, wall (303) and cobbled surface (302) looking south-west



Figure 5: Trench 3, stone surface (301) looking south-west

Trench 4 was located on the very eastern side of the site, orientated north-east to south-west. Machining removed overburden layers of demolition and disturbed subsoil deposits at c.0.7m below ground level on to the natural river terrace gravels.

No archaeological features or finds were present. The natural substratum was observed.

Length (m)	Width (m)			Area (sq. m)	Min. depth	n (m)	Max	. depth (m)	Surface le	evel	Arc	haeology?
10	1.6			16	0.7			0.7	73.25m	ı		No
Interval (m) from southwest end	0	5	5	10								
Overburden depth	0.7	0.	.7	0.7								
Subsoil depth	-	-		-								
Top of natural substratum	0.7	0.	.7	0.7								
Base of trench	0.7	0.	.7	0.7								

Trench 5

Trench 5 was located parallel to the north side of Trench 3, orientated broadly north-west to south-east. The deposits of made ground including brick rubble and levelling layers of greybrown silty-clay were essentially the same as those encountered in Trench 3. Natural geology was believed to be encountered at the south-east end of the trench however contamination of fuel had seeped in the gravel making this difficult to discern.

Overall, no archaeological features or finds were recorded. The natural substratum was probably observed in the south-east extent of the trench.

Length (m)	Width (m)		Area (sq. m)	Min. depth	epth (m) Max. depth (n		Min. depth (m) Max. depth (depth (m) Max. depth (m)		Min. depth (m)		Min. depth (m)		Min. depth (m) Max. depth (m)		Surface le	evel	Arch	aeology?
30	1.6		48	0.5			0.8	73.27m	1		No									
Interval (m) from northwest end	0	5	10	15	20	0	25	30												

Overburden depth	0.5	0.65	0.5	0.55	0.6	0.8	0.75	
Subsoil depth	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Top of natural substratum	-	-	-	-	-	0.8m?	-	
Base of trench	0.5	0.65	0.5	0.55	0.6	0.8	0.75	

Trench 6 was located in about the middle of the site, orientated broadly north-north-eastsouth-south-west. Machining removed demolition rubble and levelling layers of re-deposited clay and sand to at least a 1m depth.

No archaeological features or finds were present. The natural substratum was not observed.

Length (m)	Width (m)		Area (sq. m)	Min. depth	n (m)	Max	. depth (m)	Surface le	evel	Arc	haeology?
20	1.6		32	0.6			1.0	73.31m			No
Interval (m) from south-south-west end	0	5	10	15	2	0					
Overburden depth	1.0	0.8	0.8	0.6	0	.8					
Subsoil depth	-	-	-	-	-	-					
Top of natural substratum	-	-	-	-		-					
Base of trench	1.0	0.8	0.8	0.6	0	.8					

Trench 7

Trench 7 was located to the west of the site, orientated broadly east-west. Machining revealed loose sand and brick backfilling, as in Trench 1. No archaeological features or finds were present. Natural geology was not uncovered.

Length (m)			Area (sq. m)	Min denth (m)		n (m)	Max. depth (m)		Surface level		Archaeology	
30	30 1.6 48			0.5		0.8		73.19m		No		
Interval (m) from west end	0	5	10		15	2	0	25	30			
Overburden depth	0.8	0.5	0.6		0.6	0.	.6	0.6	0.7			
Subsoil depth	-	-	-		-	-		-	-			
Top of natural substratum	-	-	-		-	-		-	-			
Base of trench	0.8	0.5	0.6		0.6	0.	.6	0.6	0.7			

Trench 8

Trench 8 was located in the north-east corner of the site, orientated broadly north-west to south-east. Machining removed demolition rubble and hardcore layers on average 0.5m deep onto grey-brown silty-clay, probably subsoil, on average 0.4m thick. Removing this layer revealed seven linear features and one pit truncating the natural gravels.

The pit [805] was circular, 1m long, 0.83m wide with steep sides and a concave base. It was filled by (804), red-brown silty-sand with frequent pebble and flint inclusions, 0.25m thick. This truncated gully [807] aligned east-west, 0.25m wide, with moderately steep sides and a

slightly concave base. It was filled by (806), grey-brown, silty-sand with few pebble inclusions, 0.14m thick.

Ditch [809] was aligned approximately north-south, 0.74m wide, with steep sides and a fairly flat base. It was filled by (808), grey-brown silty-clay with frequent pebble and charcoal inclusions, 0.17m deep. This produced two sherds of pottery. The ditch appeared to terminate just before the trench edge and before it reached ditch [811] which also terminated. These two possibly form and entrance corner. Ditch [811] was aligned approximately eastwest, 1.1m wide, with moderately steep sides and a slightly concave base. It was filled with (810) mid grey-brown sandy silt, 0.25m thick. This ditch was truncated directly to the north by gully [813] on the same alignment, 0.5m wide, with steep sides and a flattish base. It was filled with (812), dark grey-brown sandy-silt with frequent stone and occasional charcoal inclusions, 0.23m deep.

Slightly further to the south-east on a similar alignment was ditch [815], 1.05m wide, with moderately steep sides, and a sloping base. It was filled with (814) mid grey-brown silty-sand with occasional small stone inclusions, 0.21m thick. Three fragments of animal bone were recovered from this fill.

At the south-east end of the trench were two further linear features, both aligned east-west. Ditch [817] was 1.23m wide, filled with (816), grey-brown sandy silt, with frequent stones. Ditch [819] was directly next to this, 1.32m wide, filled by (818), grey-brown silty-sand with frequent pebbles. The slot through this ditch had to be abandoned due to rising water levels within the trench even with a sondage dug right next to it. Ditch [817] was also not excavated because of this.

Length (m)	Width (m)			Min. depth (m)		Max. depth (m)		Surface le	evel	el Archaeolog		
30	1.6			48	0.6		1.0		73.21m	1		Yes
Interval (m) from northwest end	0	5		10	15	2	0	25	30			
Overburden depth	0.5	0.6		0.5	0.45	0.	.5	0.5	0.5			
Subsoil depth	0.5	0.4		0.4	0.4	0.	.4	0.4	0.4			
Top of natural substratum	1.0	1.0		0.9	0.85	0.	.9	0.9	0.9			
Base of trench	1.0	1.0		0.9	0.85	0.	.9	0.9	0.9			

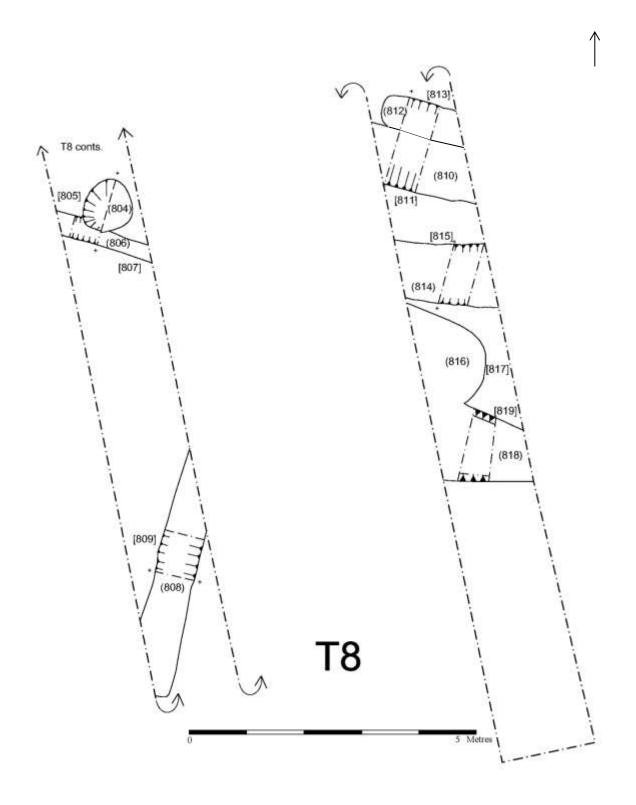


Figure 6: Trench 8 plan

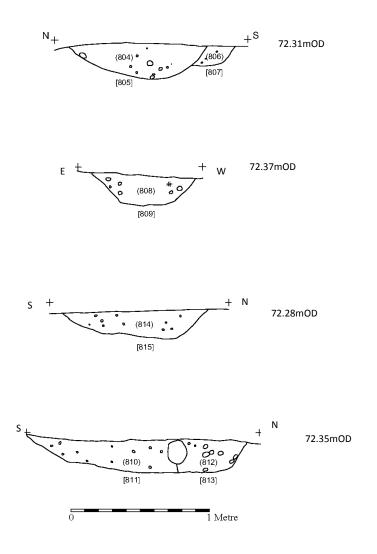


Figure 7: Trench 8 sections



Figure 8: Trench 8, pit [805] and gully [807] looking east



Figure 9: Trench 8, ditch [809] looking north

Trench 9 was located in the northern part of the site. Due to 1m of overburden across that area of the site, a sondage was machined in a small area that did not have the overburden. Machining removed re-deposited brown sandy-clay down to natural mixed red-yellow sand.

No archaeological features or finds were present. The natural substratum was reached.

Length (m)	Width (m)		Area (sq. m)	Min. depth	n (m) Max.		. depth (m)	Surface le	evel	Arc	haeology?
2	1.6		3.2	0.6			0.6	73.48m	1		No
Overburden depth	0.6										
Subsoil depth	-										
Top of natural substratum	-	-	-	-	-	-	1.5m				
Base of trench	0.6										

Trench 10

Trench 10 was located in the north-east corner of the site, orientated north-west to south-east. Machining removed demolition rubble and levelling layers of sandy clay to a mixed gravel and stone natural substratum. This revealed black staining at the north-west end of the trench.

Length (m)	Width (m)		Area (sq. m)		Min. depth (m)		Max. depth (m)		Surface level		Archaeology?	
10	1.6		16		0.9		1.0		73.29m		No	
Interval (m) from northwest end	0	5		10								
Overburden depth	0.9	1.0	0	0.9								
Subsoil depth	-	-		-								
Top of natural substratum	0.9	1.0	0	0.9								
Base of trench	0.9	1.0	0	0.9								

No archaeological features or finds were present.

Discussion

Generally the results of the evaluation have shown truncation by the H. W. Coates depot and the demolition of buildings that previously occupied the site. The first edition OS map of 1886 shows these to have been Church Farm (located east of the site, incorporating the tithe barn into its range), and Ivy Hall Farm (located approximately in the middle of the site. This would account for the large number of brick demolition material excavated within the trenches. The wall in Trench 3 (303) appears to tie in with a boundary wall curving from the north (Figure 10), and the surface (301) seems likely to have been associated with a yard/path bounded by two east-west boundary walls.

There does not appear to be any suggestion of the usage of the linear features and pit found in Trench 8 on the 1886 OS map. It is probable that they are the remains of previous ownership boundaries between parcels of land. It is equally possible that they are also incorporated as small drainage ditches. Only two sherds of pottery, both dating from the 13-14th centuries were recovered. They were domestic in nature, and relatively locally made.

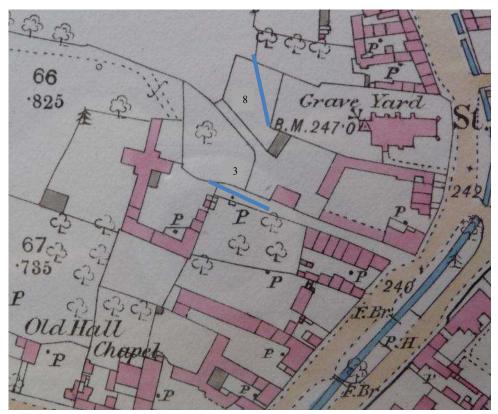


Figure 10. Location of trenches 3 and 8 in relation to buildings shown on 1st edition OS map

The geotechnical survey (Sirius 2011) confirms the extent of disturbance on the site with made ground with brick fragments in all samples. The natural substratum was shown to be present at an average depth of c. 1.5m from the 11 test pits and window samples undertaken in the survey (Figure 11).

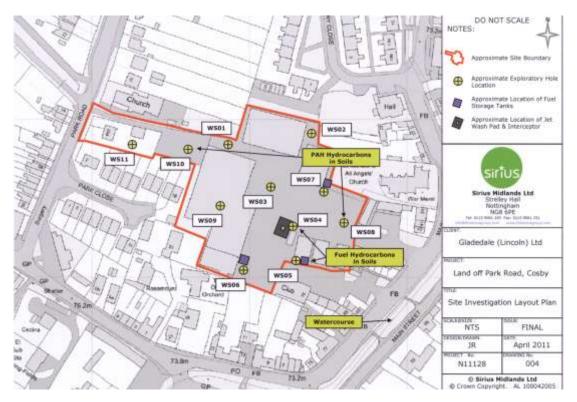


Figure 11 Plan of location of geotechnical pits (from Sirius 2011).

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- Kipling, R., 2013, An Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment of Land at 61 Main Street, Cosby, Leicestershire. Leicester, unpublished ULAS Report No. 2013-133

Sirius 2011 Land Off Park Road, Cosby Phase I & II Geo-Environmental Investigation Sirius Midlands Ltd April 2011.

Archive

The site archive consists of: 10 A4 trench recording form, 11 context sheets, 1 context index sheet, 1 drawing sheet index, 1 A4 photo index, digital photographs, 2 A3 permatrace sheets of site drawings.

The site archive will be held by Leicestershire County Council Museum Services under the accession number X.A79.2014.

Publication

Since 2004 ULAS has reported the results of all archaeological work through the *Online Access to the Index of Archaeological Investigations* (OASIS) database held by the Archaeological Data Service at the University of York. A summary of the work will also be submitted for publication in a suitable regional archaeological journal in due course.

OASIS no.	universi1-181284
Project Name	Land at 61 Main Street, Cosby, Leicestershire
Project Type	Evaluation
Project Manager	Patrick Clay
Project Supervisor	Nathan Flavell
Previous/Future work	DBA/ strip plan and sample excavation
Current Land Use	Brownfield
Development Type	Residential
Reason for Investigation	NPPF
Position in the Planning Process	Condition
Site Co ordinates	SP 54721 94852
Start/end dates of field work	22/5/2014 - 30/5/2014
Archive recipient	Leicestershire
Study Area	<i>c</i> . 1.041 ha

Acknowledgements

Thanks are extended to the client and contractors for their co-operation and assistance on site. Fieldwork was undertaken by Nathan Flavell and Luis Huscroft; the report was written by Nathan Flavell and the project was managed for ULAS by Patrick Clay.

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12/6/2014

Appendix I: The Medieval Pottery

Deborah Sawday

The pottery, two sherds, weighing 39 grams, and a vessel rim equivalent of 0.073, (calculated by adding together the circumference of the surviving rim sherds, where one vessel equals 1.00) was catalogued with reference to the guidelines set out by the Medieval Pottery Research Group, (MPRG 1998; MPRG, 2001) and the ULAS fabric series (Sawday 2009).

The results are shown below (table 1). The two sherds' which were recovered from the backfill, context 808, of a ditch, are in hand made Potters Marston ware, (Haynes 1952; Sawday 1991). The thickness of the walls and the flared shape and decoration on the bowl suggest a date in the 13th or 14th centuries for the two finds. Potters Marston, the site of an important pottery production centre in the medieval period, lies less than 7km to the west of the village of Cosby, and was the source of most of the coarse wares in the locality during the 13th and 14th centuries. The relatively large average sherd weight and lack of abrasion on the pottery, suggest that undisturbed archaeological levels may survive in the vicinity.

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Table 1: The medieval pottery by fabric, sherd numbers and weight (grams) by context.

context	Fabric/ware	No.	grams	Comments
808	PM – Potters Marston	1	15	Flared bowl rim, external diameter 270mm, 0.073 EVEs. Rim thickened with some evidence of seemingly thumbing on the exterior rim. Heavily sooted externally.
808	PM	1	24	Lower body and convex base, sooted on exterior surfaces.

Site/ Parish: 61 Main Street, Cosby, Leics.	Submitter: N. Flavell
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Accession No.: X.A79.2014	Identifier: D. Sawday
Document Ref: cosby1.docx	Date of Identification: 09.06.2014
Material: pottery	Method of Recovery: evaluation
Site Type: medieval village core	Job Number: 14-595

Appendix II: Animal Bone

Jennifer Browning

The animal bone recovered by hand during the evaluation was rapidly scanned to assess preservation and variety and therefore provide an indication of the faunal potential, should the site progress to excavation (Table 2). The bones were recovered from a deposit possibly associated with medieval settlement.

A small quantity of animal bone was recovered during the work and the evidence suggests that the soil conditions across the site are not favourable to bone survival. Eight features were excavated however a single ditch fill produced animal bones. These comprised long-bone shaft fragments from a large mammal but were not diagnostic enough to identify to bone element or species. The bone surface was abraded and exfoliating, inhibiting the identification of modifications such as butchery or pathologies. Both ancient and modern fragmentation had occurred. Unfortunately, the small size and poor quality of the bone assemblage can provide little archaeological information. A much larger and better preserved sample would be needed to provide useful insights concerning the exploitation of animal resources at the site.

 Table 2: Summary of assemblage

Context	Feature	Preservation	Brief Description
814	ditch	poor	4 x large mammal long-bone shaft fragments

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